

Remember When...

By
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As I drive with my wife to grab a bite to eat I reminisce about the “good old days” with her. I often get the stare from her because I rant and rave about how girl’s shorts are too short and boy’s hair is too long nowadays. In her playful way, she tells me that I’m getting old and need to understand the change in the culture of today’s youth. She also reminds me that when I was a teenager bent on rebelling against anything my parents said that I too had long hair and a counter-culture attitude. To my defense, it was the 80’s and the long hair turned into male pattern baldness soon enough. I can vividly remember one thing that was instilled in me from my youth that didn’t fall into the “uncool” category as a teen and that remained with me until today. That is the respect for our country’s flag.

I firmly believe that today’s youth also understand the incredible history our flag stands for and the thousands of heroes that gave their life for the concept of a free nation governed by its people, for its people. Every now and again I will see an individual that neglects to pay the proper respect for our flag when it is moving, either at reveille, retreat, or in passing. I want to believe that it is because they are not properly educated on the customs and courtesies that should be displayed when our great nation’s flag is being raised, lowered, or carried in passing. So, I made it my mission to correct this educational deficiency and I implore you use this article to do the same if you encounter someone who is uneducated on proper respect for our flag.

It’s really very simple. If you are military in uniform and outdoors, face the flag or music and stand at parade rest for the first song (‘Reveille’ during Reveille and ‘To the Colors’ during Retreat), stand at attention for the second song (‘To the Colors’ during Reveille and ‘Star Spangled Banner’ during Retreat), render a crisp and sharp salute at the first note of the second song and release the salute at the last note. This applies for PT, utility, and duty uniforms. If you are military,

or a veteran, and in civilian attire you may render a salute for these occasions as well. If you are a civilian, non-veteran, stand and face the flag or music, remove your head cover if you have one, and place your right hand over your heart. ALL vehicles in motion should come to a stop and the occupants should sit quietly until the music stops. Don't forget that all personnel should stand for the national anthem when played before a movie in the base theater as well.

It is a simple and easy thing to do when we show respect for our flag. Never forget that you are the ambassador for the elite military force of the United States of America. You never know what kind of impact you may make on a child, teenager, or adult when you stand proudly and salute our flag! Pass this heritage and right on to the next generation so that we may all relish in the freedoms that so many other countries and people around the world don't yet have.

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